

Update

Over the past two years, two agency activities have significantly shaped our organization:

- 2001 - the Employee Satisfaction Survey. This survey is conducted every two years. In the most recent survey, a new question - Question 86 - was introduced. Employees were asked to evaluate several factors that are known to contribute to morale, rating each on its relative importance. Of those who responded, 98 percent indicated that "trust and respect among people" was important or extremely important to them.
- 2002 - Review of the Agency's Vision, Mission, Values, and Goals. In the early part of 2002, the Agency reviewed the Vision, Mission, Cultural Attributes, and Goals. During the review, "cultural attributes" were redefined as "values" and five values were identified - respect, integrity, cooperation, professionalism, and continuous improvement.

In this newsletter, we will learn more about the activities of the Agency's Trust and Respect Team - a team created in response to the Employee Satisfaction Survey. We will provide articles which identify the relevance of values to organizational success and share some of the ways our Agency is striving to ensure that the Agency's values are "made real" within the Department of Revenue.

We're also sharing some important information you'll need when writing up ideas for the Governor's office. Please read about the new process!

Update on the Agency "Trust and Respect" Quality Team

By Leslie Cushman

The agency-wide team on Trust and Respect has been hard at work delving into the importance of trust and respect in the workplace. Currently, the Team is finalizing definitions of "trust" and "respect." The draft definitions are very basic and drive to the heart of the two terms. The Team will recommend that the definitions be used throughout the agency so that the trust and respect values are understood and appreciated agency wide.

The Team has also been busy identifying the root causes associated with why trust and respect may be eroded in a work situation, as well as what maintains and enhances trust and respect. A variety of quality tools have been used in this part of the work. Think fishbone! With the root causes in hand, the Team has explored possible solutions. In fact,

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close to one hundred ways to positively impact trust and respect have been put forth. The outcome of the Team's work will, of course, focus on only a handful of solutions. The Team is working hard to fit solutions to problems and to assure that the recommendations can be measured and tracked to monitor the success of this effort.

It is clear from the Team's work that while each division may have its own set of issues particular to their work environment, overall trust and respect is an important value to the agency and central to being part of a high quality work force. Look for recommendations regarding communication, conflict management, and a code of conduct. Also on the table are enhanced training opportunities for supervisors and staff and a forum to discuss trust and respect in small groups.

The team is expected to complete its work by June 30, 2003. For additional information, please contact your divisional representative on the team:

Appeals – Cristine Wiest
Audit – Christine Younger, Sandy Halford
Compliance – Bill O'Reilly, Arthur Harvey
F&ES – Kim Asbach
IS – Lonna Hocker
L&P – Beulah Holman, Leslie Cushman
Property Tax – Harold Smith
Research – Diane Mielke
Special Programs – Dwayne Woolsey
TAA – Kristine Rompa, Ralph Osgood
Taxpayer Services – Heather Mattingly, Tremaine Smith
WPEA – Linda Brown

There must be decency and respect, and veneration introduced for persons of authority of every rank, or we are undone. In a popular government, this is our only way.

- John Adams

Quality Update

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Reflections for Leaders

By Joel and Michelle Levey, Chairpersons, The Center for Corporate Culture and Organizational Health

<http://www.wisdomatwork.com/BUSINESS/center/EAPA.html>

In today's market, the increasing demand for managers and experienced employees coupled with a declining supply, compels organizations to look at factors which allow an organization to attract and retain the best employees.

In a time of cost cutting, outsourcing and fierce competition, there are enormous costs associated with the loss of the best talent. Yet there are also opportunities awaiting those who understand the key motivators for retaining employees.

According to Pfeffer, (The Human Equation) "It is almost impossible to successfully implement high performance or high commitment work practices in the absence of mutual trust and respect." His contention is that all workplace practices and changes should be evaluated by a simple criterion: "Do they convey and create trust?"

Information gathered from the "Fortune 100 Best companies" indicates that companies that have a culture in which "trust and respect" flourishes, have half the turnover and nearly twice the applications for employment.

According to Pfeffer, leaders are tasked with developing "organizational cultures with the strong foundation of trust and mutual respect necessary for almost super-fluid communication." By promoting synergy, teamwork and organizational learning - and building a sense of community - leaders can sustain quality working relationships.

Fourteen studies on the relationship of employee fulfillment and business performance concluded that the single largest contributor to the feelings of employee fulfillment and satisfaction lies in the day-to-day relationship they have with the organization's leaders. "Talented people want spiritual goals that energize an organization by resonating with the personal values of the people who work there, the kind of mission that offers people a chance to do work that makes a difference."

Peak performance is achieved when our workplaces honor basic human needs for safety, security, trust, respect and supportive relationships. The far-reaching benefits of meeting those needs are realized when organizations are able to retain employees they cannot afford to lose.

It is better to suffer wrong than to do it, and happier to be sometimes cheated than not to trust.

- Samuel Johnson



Happiness is that state of consciousness which proceeds from the achievement of one's values.

- Ayn Rand

Strategy Team Works to Make Values Come Alive

By Will Rice and Wendy Fraser

The Strategy Team devoted time in November and December 2002 to clarifying their purpose and defining internal team values. While the Strategy Team spends a few days every year away from the office discussing budget and strategic planning, it has been nearly five years since they focused on their purpose and internal workings as a team.

Trust and respect is a crucial element of this team working together - just as it is a pervasive need throughout any organization. The Strategy Team took the five agency values – Respect, Integrity, Cooperation, Professionalism, and Continuous Improvement – created definitions that were meaningful to the team, and identified behaviors associated with those values that would allow them to “come alive.”

Perhaps each team in the agency (every section, office, etc.) could have these conversations too. Take the five agency values and host a discussion with each other. Talk about what it means to you and the kinds of behaviors that support that definition. Come to some agreement, then post them around. Support each other in living these common values - it's a great way to build trust and respect in the workplace!

Aligning our Values

By Julie Andersen

Ours is a culture that highly prizes individuality. A nation built upon the principles of self-determination and rugged individualism - we are encouraged to think independently and to use our unique talents to shape and create the lives we desire. Individual achievement and personal endeavors in medical and technological research, literary and artistic creativity, and other disciplines have enriched our lives.

Yet individual efforts are necessarily limited - they are the products of “singular” thought and action. Most successful efforts are co-created; they arise from the synergy of multiple perspectives and the co-operative efforts of many working together.

If creating a bridge between the individual and the group is essential to truly effective organizations, is there a way to honor the individual while simultaneously creating

organizations that are “one in purpose”?

When others believe and behave as we do, we human beings experience camaraderie and easy relationships. We find it easy to trust and respect those who align with our view of the world. We understand those who respond to situations and behave in ways reflective of our own style.

It is when others “march to a different drum” that we find our relationships most challenging. During those times, our commitment to a shared set of values can become the lubricant that honors individuality while simultaneously fostering what is good for the “community.” A core set of values, like the beacon on a foggy night, can guide our actions and help us through the difficult challenges we will inevitably face.

In the early part of last year, our agency

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 focused on five “values” - respect,
 integrity, cooperation, professionalism, and
 continuous improvement.

These values, when we fully live them,
 instruct our behavior and help us
 understand how to honor each other and
 create an environment that fosters good
 will. When we live our shared values we
 retain our individuality and simultaneously
 co-create organizations of shared purpose
 and vision.

In our best moments, when our values are
 aligned the organizations we create are not
 unlike a rich tapestry, beautifully designed
 from individual threads and seamlessly
 woven - creating an image that inspires and
 enriches our lives.

Life’s ups and down provide windows of opportunity to determine your values and goals. Think of using all obstacles as stepping stones to build the life you want.

- Marsha Sinetar

On a group of theories one can find a school; but on a group of values one can find a culture, a civilization, a new way of living together among men (people).

- Iganzaio Silone

Quarter Reporting to the Governor’s Office

By Wendy Fraser

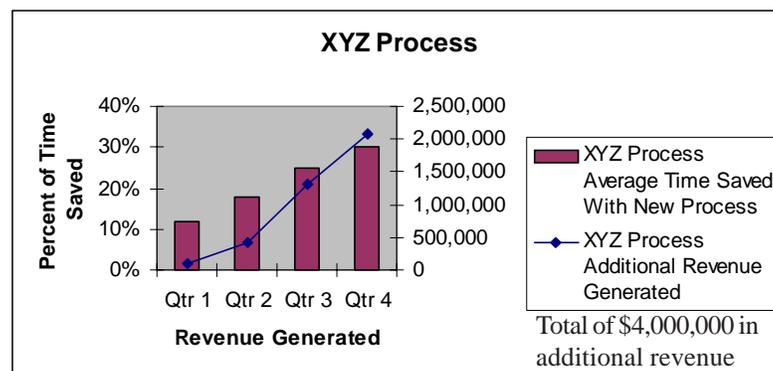
Did you know that the template for the quarter reports we send to the Governor’s Office has been updated? The same information on what the problem was and how it was fixed is still there, however in the data section something new has emerged.

Instead of just sending in an annualized number of hours saved, revenue generated, or dollars saved, we need to send along a graphical display of the data. Something like this:

Old way of reporting results:

Improved turnaround time by 30% over four quarters
 Generated a total of \$4,000,000 in additional revenue because of improved process

New way of reporting results:



Got questions? Julie Andersen and Wendy Fraser are here to help! If you have an improvement to report, let us know and we’ll work with you!